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Letter dated 25 February 2011 from the Permanent Representatives of the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

We have the honour to enclose herewith the joint press statement by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on Afghanistan, released in London on 15 February 2011 (see annex).

We would like to request your kind assistance in having the contents of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**
Permanent Representative of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Vitaly **Churkin**
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 25 February 2011 from the Permanent Representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: English and Russian]

Joint press statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on the situation in Afghanistan

London, 15 February 2011

Today, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation met in London following their successful meeting in Moscow on 13 October 2010.

The Ministers reconfirmed their commitment to Afghanistan becoming a peaceful, stable, democratic and economically self-sufficient State, free of terrorism and narcotics. Afghanistan and her neighbours should follow the principles of non-interference and not pose a threat to each other. The Ministers highlighted their readiness to continue providing multifaceted assistance to stabilization and sustainable economic development of Afghanistan. They expressed their support for the "Kabul process" that, inter alia, envisages the transition of responsibilities for maintaining security in Afghanistan to the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghan National Security Forces by the end of 2014.

The Ministers expressed their support for the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to achieve a comprehensive and representative political settlement, as well as for the work of the High Peace Council and the Government of Afghanistan's Peace and Reintegration Programme. They welcomed President Karzai's efforts to reach out to all Afghans who break all ties with Al-Qaida and other terrorist groups, renounce violence and work within the framework of the Afghan Constitution. They stressed their ongoing commitment to the United Nations sanctions regime, as imposed pursuant to Security Council resolution 1267 (1999). They agreed to continue efforts to consider carefully candidates for de-listing from the consolidated list in accordance with Security Council resolution 1822 (2008). They recognized the importance of the sanctions list in helping address the terrorist threat from Al-Qaida and the Taliban and agreed to consider adding to the list individuals who support and finance the insurgency, in line with Security Council resolution 1822 (2008).

The Ministers agreed to work together to support the Government of Afghanistan in achieving enhanced cooperation with international and regional partners including the United Nations, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to help build a stable and economically viable Afghanistan. They stressed that any political process must be underpinned by broad international and regional support and welcomed the positive engagement of Afghanistan's neighbours.

The Ministers confirmed the need to continue working closely together at political and operational levels to tackle illicit drug production, trade and trafficking in the region, which pose a threat to international peace and stability. They stressed the importance of tackling narcotics along the entire chain of production and distribution, including through support for Afghan-led eradication, promotion of alternative livelihoods, tackling illicit financial flows, intercepting supplies of precursors and taking measures to reduce drug use.

The Ministers agreed to continue providing practical and political support to existing multilateral cooperation mechanisms, in particular the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Paris Pact. They expressed support for the concrete steps taken by the Government of Afghanistan to improve efforts on law enforcement and the fight against organized crime.

The Ministers stressed they would work together through the NATO-Russian Council to support the Government of Afghanistan throughout the transition process, emphasizing the importance of implementation of the NATO-Russian Council Lisbon Summit goal to develop a NATO-Russian Council Trust Fund for the technical service of "Mi"-type Afghan helicopters. The Ministers noted the important role played by the transit route through the Russian Federation's territory. They also noted the successful counter-narcotics project carried out under the auspices of the NATO-Russian Council and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, aided by contributions from the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation, including a substantial contribution from the All-Russian Institute for Advanced Studies for the Ministry of Interior of the Russian Federation.